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Nebraska Health & Human Services
NEBRASKA WIC PROGRAM
**Title: Questionable WIC Food
Instruments**

Purpose To provide guidance for documentation of follow-up for questionable food instruments.

**Overview of Other
Problem WIC
Checks**

Post payment edits are performed on all paid food instruments to help detect problems and/or concerns.

- The edits are:
 - Food prescription altered
 - Food instrument presented for payment before the first date to use
 - Food instrument voided in the system and subsequently presented for payment
 - Food instrument paid by overriding edit criteria
 - Request to pull food instruments for a specific vendor
 - Request to pull food instruments for a specific participant
 - Compliance buy food instrument
 - Food instruments meeting these edits are identified and reviewed by the State WIC staff. If follow-up is deemed necessary the State WIC staff will then send a copy of the food instrument along with the form for questionable paid food instruments, example page 4h, to the local WIC agency.
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**Follow-up and
Documentation**

- Food prescription is altered
 - ☐ Follow-up with the participant

Step

Action

- 1 Complete Integrity Form to determine if sanctions are warranted and that appropriate education is completed with the participant.
- 2 Refer to Volume V, Section J for additional guidance.

- ☐ Follow-up with the vendor

Step

Action

- 1 Contact the vendor and complete the Nebraska WIC Program Vendor Follow-up Report. Reinforce to the vendor to not accept altered WIC food instruments from shoppers and to notify the WIC agency when someone tries to cash altered food instruments. Explain that alternations should not be made to the WIC food instrument.

- 2 Code this vendor contact in the WIC computer system using the Vendor Change Form.
 - 3 Notify the State agency to discuss the visit and findings and to determine if additional follow-up is needed. Sanction points may be issued by the State WIC office for accepting an altered food instrument or for altering an food instrument.
- Food instrument presented for payment before the first date to use
 - State WIC staff will review periodically.
 - Food instrument voided in the system and subsequently presented for payment
 - If clinic staff in error, discuss with staff the importance of voiding the correct food instruments by completing the following steps.

Step	Action
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|---|---|
| 1 | Whenever possible the local agency should physically have the food instrument. |
| 2. | Verify the food instrument number(s) in the WIC computer system with the actual food instruments in hand. |
| 3. | Immediately stamp or write void on the food instrument and set aside in a secure place. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | If the food instrument has been misnumbered, review with clinic staff the importance of <u>"watching"</u> to make sure the red and black numbers on the food instruments <u>always</u> match so that misnumbered food instruments are not given to clients. If misnumbering occurs on the food instruments staff should <u>immediately</u> contact the State WIC office so the problem can be corrected. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | It is critical that the voided food instruments are not given to the client for accurate food instrument reconciliation and documentation. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• | If error not made by staff, follow-up is to be completed with the participant. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Follow-up with the participant. |

Step	Action
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|---|---|
| 1 | Complete Integrity Form. |
| 2 | Refer to Volume V, Section J for additional guidance. |
- Food instrument paid by overriding edit criteria
 - Educate clinic staff on the importance of **"watching"** to make sure the red and black numbers on the food instruments **always** match so that misnumbered food instruments are not given to clients. If misnumbering occurs on the food instruments staff should **immediately** contact the State WIC office so the problem can be

corrected.

- Request to pull food instruments for a specific vendor
 - Follow-up and documentation as directed by the State WIC office and in consultation with the local agency WIC staff based upon the food instruments pulled and the problems noted during the review.
- Request to pull food instruments for a specific participant
 - Follow-up and documentation as directed by the State WIC office and in consultation with the local agency WIC staff based upon the food instruments pulled and the problems noted during the review.
- Compliance buy food instruments
 - Follow-up and documentation regarding compliance buy food instruments will be completed by the State WIC office. Based upon the review of the food instruments redeemed the State WIC office will determine what follow-up action is deemed necessary. See Volume IV, Section K for additional information regarding compliance investigations.

**Problems
Identified
Through
Review of
Pulled Food
Instruments**

- The following is a list of problems which may be detected through a review of food instruments, the action to be taken, and the required documentation.
 - Error: The signature is not the responsible party's or the authorized proxy or is a forgery.

Step	Action
1	Discuss with the participant. Complete an Integrity Form. Refer to Volume V, Section J for additional guidance.
2	If food instruments were reported as lost or stolen contact the State WIC office.
3.	If vendor abuse is suspected contact the State WIC office.

- Error: The "pay exactly" amount disagrees with the estimated price and the food prescription has not been altered.

Step	Action
1	Estimate the value of the food prescription again by referring to the vendor's price list. If the "Pay Exactly" amount is appropriate, indicate on form letter, example page 4h, and return to State agency.
2.	If the amount still remains unjustified, discuss with the participant. Complete an Integrity Form. If it is determined to be a result of participant action, see Volume V, Section J for additional guidance.
3.	Discuss with the vendor, if the amount still remains unjustified. Contact the vendor to discuss the food instrument and to give the vendor the opportunity to justify the "Pay Exactly" amount.

Notify State agency to request a reimbursement from the vendor if vendor abuse is suspected.

- Unexplainable overcharges on food instruments which have cleared the bank will be handled by the State agency. A reimbursement request letter and when possible a copy of the food instrument(s) in question, will be sent to the vendor. A reimbursement check or a response will be due back from the vendor within 30 days of the notification.
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on letterhead form of paid items etc.